

Story 1304 (1988 Tape 8)

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The Disciplining of Children by a Laz¹

Temel² had a child whom he was determined to rear under strict discipline. One day while the child was playing, he broke an expensive vase. When Temel was about to spank the child for what he had done, Temel's wife, Fatma, said, "Don't spank him this time. Warn him not to do such a thing again. If he should do it again, spank him then."

Temel thought about this for a few seconds and then he said, "Let me spank him now. What if he doesn't do it again?"

¹The Laz people constitute one of the larger ethnic minorities in Turkey. Their exact origins are not definitely known. The largest concentrations of Lazes are in extreme northeastern Turkey along the Black Sea coast. Reputedly stupid, they are made fun of in numerous folk anecdotes about fools. The frequent success of Lazes who move to Istanbul belies the folk image.

²Temel (like Dursun) is a name given to so many Laz males that it signals Laz to most Turkish audiences. Because Lazes are stereotyped as stupid people, the name Temel may be applied to any stupid person whether or not he happens to be Laz.